

Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a terrifying example of the dangers of media consolidation. It is irresponsible and immoral for those who have the power to disseminate information, to use that information to further their own financial gains to the detriment of the rest of society. If this is allowed to go on, we have a worse model than the state-sponsored media of dictatorships; we will have a corporation-sponsored media run by the highest bidder. Without access to information there can be no discourse. Lack of discourse stifles choice and without choice, there can be no freedom. Consolidation of media contributes a threat to what we hold most dear as Americans.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. But when large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. Instead of something produced at "News Central" far away, it's more important that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard. Thank you.